

Restart your stalled genealogy

By JANICE MOORE CRONAN

Bay County Genealogical Society

I feel fall fast approaching, as the mornings begin to get cooler and the leaves start turning. This is the best time of year because our monthly genealogy meetings restart after what seems like a long, hot summer. Did it seem that way to you, too?

With genealogy meetings restarting we can get recharged and tackle those brick-walled ancestors. What better way to do this than by attending the Bay County Genealogical Society's economically-priced fall seminar, which will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24, at the beautiful Forest Park United Methodist Church at the corner of Lisenby and 23rd Street in Panama City.

Did the phrase "economically priced" pique your interest? Well, it should have, because compared to other seminars, which can cost upward of \$40 plus travel expense, this is a bargain! Our society is dedicated to promoting interest in genealogy and providing educational opportunities about researching our family history to the residents of our county and the surrounding areas. Who better to teach us about genealogy than nationally known professional speaker and certified genealogist C. Ann Staley, CGSM, CGLSM? There will be four presentations by Ms. Staley, snacks, barbecue lunch and door prizes for the aforementioned costs. For pre-registered Bay County Genealogical Society (BCGS) members, the cost will be \$25; non-members, \$30, and \$35 at the door. To pre-register, send your check to Bay County Genealogical Society, P. O. Box 662, Panama City, FL 32402-0662 with email address included.

Ms. Staley will help us get our research back on track with her presentation, "Claws or Clues - Scratching for the Elusive Ancestor." If you have brick-walled ancestors, sometimes you can take a



detour around that wall by "spreading your research net outwards." To do this we need to stop, regroup and check where we've been and where we need to go next. Sometimes this can be done from home by using the Internet and her presentation, "Googling Your Family: Using the Whole Google Website," will show us how to access those online records like maps, newspapers, books and more.

If you are like me, you may get sleepy after lunch, but who could sleep through this presentation? "The Twilight Zone ... Strange Websites for Family History Research" is one of Ms. Staley's most popular topics. This presentation will cover Web pages devoted to subjects that we researchers may not think would be helpful in our research. In this presentation, she examines a variety of these sites and discusses their merits and relationship to genealogical research. After a stimulating title like the previous presentation, we will be ready to come back to earth with "Courthouses and the Records They Keep." Many records can be found only in courthouses, and Ms. Staley will share her years of experience and expertise with us as she teaches us about them and how they can aid in our genealogy research.

Janice Moore Cronan writes a monthly column for the Bay County Genealogical Society, which meets the third Saturday of each month at 1 p.m. in the library. She can be reached at jmcronan@aol.com.